

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BANGKO 13197 231225Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 231145Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE NIACT 5959

S E C R E T BANGKOK 13197

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, TH

SUBJECT: TALKS ON REDUCING US MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND

DEPT PASS CINCPAC AND USSAG FOR GENERAL VOGT

REF: A. STATE 161191/142318Z AUG 73

B. BANGKOK 12884 C. BANGKOK 13107

1. WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY MFA THAT THAI SIDE EXPECTS AT FRIDAY NEGOTIATING SESSION NO COMPLICATIONS AND QUICK AGREEMENT ON FIRST TRANCHE OF US WITHDRAWALS AS INITIALLY OUTLINED TO PRIMIN THANOM BY AMBASSADOR LAST WEEK (REF B).

2. US SIDE WILL TABLE PAPER DETAILING FIRST TRANCHE REDUCTIONS, NOTING THAT US MILITARY FORCES IN THAILAND AS OF AUGUST 1 WERE ALREADY DOWN MORE THAN 2,000 FROM JULY 1972 PEAK, AND SEEKING AUTHORITY FOR MAC COMMERCIAL CONTRACT CARRIERS TO OPERATE DIRECT FROM OFF-SHORE TO AND FROM THAI BASES TO FACILITATE EXPEDITIOUS REDEPLOYMENT.

3. WORKING FROM A DRAFT PRESS STATEMENT PROVIDED BY MFA LATE AUGUST 23, WE BELIEVE THAT WE CAN NEGOTIATE A FOLLOW-ON ANNOUNCEMENT WITH TEXT ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

ON AUGUST 17, BE 2516 (1973), THE UNITED STATES AND HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT AGREED TO PROCEED WITH OFFICIAL DISCUSSIONS WITH A VIEW OF REDUCING THE LEVEL OF UNITED STATES FORCES IN

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THAILAND.

ACCORDINGLY, REPRESENTATIVES OF THW TWO GOVERNMENTS, HEADED ON THE UNITED STATES SIDE BY MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS MELLEN AND ON THE THAI SIDE BY LT. GENERAL KRIANGSAK CHOMANAN, HELD A MEETING AT 0900 HOURS, AUGUST 24, BE 2516 (1973) AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. AS A RESULT OF THESE DISCUSSIONS IT WAS AGREED THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO WITHDRAW FROM THAILAND AIRCRAFT COMPRISING THE EQUIVALENT OF SEVEN TACTICAL AIR SQUADRONS. THESE REDEPLOYMENTS WHEN COMPLETED WILL RESULT IN AN US FORCE IN THAILAND SOMEWHAT BELOW 40,000 PERSONNEL.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH A VIEW TO AGREEING ON PLANS FOR FURTHER REDUCTIONS OF THE LEVEL OF UNITED STATES FORCES IN THAILAND, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION SECURITY REQUIREMENTS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA.

4. ALTHOUGH THE THAI SIDE HAS INDICATED THAT TEXT WILL BE SUBMITTED TO PRIME MINISTER FOR APPROVAL PRIOR TO RELEASE SATURDAY MORNING, WE ANTICIPATE THAT WHEN TEXT IS AGREED THERE WILL BE PRESSURE TO RELEASE AS EARLY AS 1800G AUGUST 24. AGREED TEXT WILL BE SENT DEPARTMENT ASAP WITH BEST INDICATION OF EXPECTED TIME OF RELEASE.

5. ANY COMMENT ON CONTENT OF PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE SENT TO REACH EMBASSY NO LATER THAN 0000Z (0700G) 24 AUGUST FOR USE IN NEGOTIATIONS BEGINNING AT 0800 FRIDAY MORNING BANGKOK TIME.
UNGER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CINCPAC AND USSAG.

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